1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

868 524 knife, often the only article worn by the boy; the long hunting and fishing bow is foreshadowed by one a yard long, perhaps made of a simple piece of wild cane; the blow gun, a tube longer than the person, is in constant use; and I have seen some few actual toys such as a top made of a large round seed with a stick through it; and a rattle differing only in the degree of care in the making, from those used by the priests in their incantations.

584 The arrival of puberty is the signal for marriage, at least on the part of the girls. The courtships, if such they can be called, are carried on principally at the chicha drinkings, and I am assured that very few young [836] women retain their virginity until marriage. A plurality of wives is [595] allowed at the option of the husband. Many have two, and some three women. When a young man wishes to marry, having arranged with the girl, he applies to the father. The consent is practically a foregone conclusion; but the details of the bargain must be arranged. In most cases, [591] the groom goes to live at the house of his father-in-law, becomes, at least for a time, a member of the family, and contributes with his labor to the common support. Girls are thus available property to their families. But in case the man already has a wife; is in short, settled in life, and has his own home, he may not want to change his residence. He then compounds with the family; giving a cow, a couple of pigs, or other equivalent for the woman, in place of his services. No form of cere- [585] mony is required, and the marriage lasts as long as it suits the convenience of the parties. In case of infidelity on the part of the woman, or 586 undue cruelty on the man's part, they may separate. Sometimes, if the woman is unfaithful, the man whips her severely, and perhaps returns her to her family, or she, in a fit of resentment, leaves him. This may be for a year or so, or may be final; but during such separation either party is at liberty to make new connections, thereby remaining permanently apart.

832 Probably there is no better place to mention kissing than in connection with courtships and marriages. This agreeable custom seems to be entirely unknown. I have never seen one person among them kiss another, not even a mother her child.

582 614 There are certain limits within which parties may not marry. The tribes are divided into families, or something analogous to clans. Two persons of the same clan cannot marry. This is now a source of difficulty among the Tiribis. The tribe is so reduced that a number of marriageable persons of both sexes are unable to find eligible mates. I could not ascertain exactly how the question is settled as to which clan a person belongs, whether he inherits from father or mother, but so far as I could gather, I think from the father. Cousins, even to a remote degree, are 582 684 called brother and sister, and are most strictly prohibited from intermarriage. The law, or custom, is not an introduced one, but one handed [601] down from remote times. The penalty for its violation was originally very severe; nothing less than the burial alive of both parties. This

2;Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

Gabb[8] speaks of three classes of shamans—the *usékara*, or "high priest"; the *tsûgur* (*tsuku*), who has charge of the ceremonies for the dead; and the *awa*, doctor or sorcerer, who cures diseases and controls the rain. He says that these latter treat diseases by making passes over the body of the patient with a sloth, opossum, alligator, or even a chicken. Their powers are based on the magic potency of calculi declared to be extracted from the viscera of animals. They bleed their patients with small lancets and give a counter irritant by beating the affected part with nettle leaves.

Polygyny was practised in Gabb's time. The husband, he says, went to live with his father-in-law, or, if not, he bought his release with presents of live-stock in lieu of his services.

MATERIAL CULTURE

Habitations.—Several native types of dwellings still survive among the Bribri. The more usual variety is sideless, rectangular or oval in ground-plan, with a convex or

857 arrow, or blow gun. A favorite pasttime for
[526] both sexes is to tie a vine to a log and swing it, jumping as with a rope.

892 On the Pacific side, both sexes go to grange schools when they reach the age of seven and continue for from four to six grades, depending upon the location. Besides Spanish, the official language of Costa Rica, first year teaching is carried out in the mother tongue. Ball games, swings, and see-saws, sewing, cooking, and manual training form an important part of the program. Attention is also paid to hygienic customs. In Cabagra, reading and sewing
[871] classes for adults have been started.

582 **Marriage.** The matrilineal clan, the dominant
[614] social organization of both these peoples (*see* Social Organization), controls marriage possibilities as one cannot form a union within a blood group related to one's mother. The con-
594 trol of the family falls to the mother if she is
562 alive. Even the men respect her and cases have been known where the mother has beaten male
● 595 members. It is also important to remember that four wives are permitted (*see* Myths: *Cacao*). This is a practise followed on both
[184] sides of the range although it is as yet unseen
[582] among the youth of the Pacific slope. As a rule, a man marries sisters. The first wife is always the head of the family and can rule the others.

584 Courtship is relatively simple. In Talamanca and Chirripó the custom, which has almost entirely disappeared, was for the man to go to a house where there was a girl-child and ask for her as a wife saying, however, that he would care for her as a daughter. Then he would cut the wood for cooking, fish, make *mastate*, in fact, do daily chores for the girl's mother until the child turned twelve or reached puberty. During this intermediary period, the girl would become accustomed to the man and would run to meet him on his visits to
[591] receive some little gift. When the time came, he took her to his parents' home. There they lived in the communal house, or, if his father had too many wives with offspring, he built a house apart but at the side of his parents' house.

In 1959, the man visits his prospective wife three times. He asks her parents' permission to marry and, particularly on the Pacific side, he

584 asks his parents. There have been a few cases in this area when permission was denied. Then,
[583] the couple ran away to other indigenous communities of different tongues, for example, the Cabécares among the Bribri or vice versa. The writer does not know of similar cases in Talamanca.

583 When the answer is satisfactory, the couple
591 live from eight days to one year in trial marriage in the house of the girl. The boy works for her family cultivating the land, chopping wood, etc., until he takes his woman away to his parents' home. He must also give the girl material for dresses which she makes into clothes. If he already has a wife then he gives
●[595] a present of food or animals to the new woman's family and visits her periodically until he feels it is time to take her to his home or his parents' home.

583 On the Pacific side, social pressure against trial marriages is at times evidenced by the
[184] contemporaries of the couple, not by their
[177] elders. This is due to the influence of the school. Here when first married, the pair
591 generally stay in the house of the father of the boy, although this is not a set rule. The length of time they live there depends upon the father's age. However, from six to eight years is not uncommon. If the mother of the girl is poor and a widow, the couple go to live with her. If while living with either family on the Pacific slope, one of the pair does not get along with the prospective in-laws, they build a house apart but close to the parents. Eventually on this site, the man builds his own home.

595 In Ujarrás, there are several cases among the Cabécares of a woman and two or three men living in the same house. The woman washes and cooks only when she feels like it. When she doesn't the men take care of her.

586 On both sides, the men do not like their women to travel alone for fear they might go off with another man. When a woman leaves her husband, the children stay with the father.

182 **Death and Burial.** The most important phase
761 of the life cycle as far as ceremony and prestige are concerned is death. This is when social organization flanked by the unanswerable or mysterious aspects of religion combine in a pageant that might well put to shame many
764 theatrical producers. In the first place, there

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
[P.65(B)] SA19 Talamanca SA19
Cabecar
Bribri

* 539 [824] Humb. & Bonpl.), and the two kinds of what is commonly called wild cacao (*Theobroma angustifolium* D.C. and *Theobroma purpureum* Pittier) are formed from *spaLbu*, *soro*, and *tiŋə* respectively. Of these, only *siru* has won the hearts of all people, not alone of Talamanca, but of the entire world. And thus it is [595] that as *sibu* had four wives, the Cabécar and the Bribri can have four also, but should not have more.

The Origin of the Whale

(*Bribri*)

A bad spirit disguised as man took up with a woman and she became pregnant. Eight days later she gave birth to twins who were crawling within four days and walking within the next four days. Still four days later, they began to kill birds with a blow gun.

It was then that the grandmother said to her daughter, "Your sons are not the sons of a man because they've grown so large. I am going to find out."

The twins heard their grandmother's remark.

When the old lady went to the forest where they hunted birds, instead of the boys she found two big snakes beside a wild fig tree. These serpents had birds.

The grandmother ran to the mother and cried, "Those two sons of yours are not human."

The boys, however, returned to the house as twins.

"You see," said the grandmother.

"Don't scold me so, mother," the woman replied. "Tomorrow I am going to see if it's true that they are not human."

The next morning the boys said to their mother, "We want you to go to the forest and pick up the birds we kill."

When the mother reached the woodland, she found that her twins were two large snakes. And they ate her.

The grandmother who was waiting at home, asked the boys at their return where their mother was.

"I don't know where she went, grandmother," one replied, "because she wasn't following us."

The next day, the twins said to their grand-